

# Make Church a Part of Your Life

## WEEKLY SERMONETTE

*"Discovering God's Enabling to Forgive"*

By Preacher/Teacher Terry L. Laughlin, CrossRoads Ministries

Jesus spoke a powerful truth that should cause everyone clinging to un-forgiveness to fear the day of Judgement. Matthew 6:14-15 says, "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

Everyone knows the pain that comes when they have sinned against someone. God our heavenly Father sets forth truths for us to obey so that all who have been hurt by sin may enjoy the fruits of forgiveness.

The Lord reminded Corrie Ten Boom of that while she was serving Him in Germany in 1947. Corrie had been imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp with her father and sister. She was the only family member to survive the ordeal. After her release she traveled all over the world preaching the love of Christ and the joy of forgiveness. But one day her message of forgiveness was put to the test (found in her book, "Tramp for the Lord"). It was in a church in Munich, where she told her listeners that "God cast confessed sins into the deepest ocean, gone forever, never to be remembered against them again." After she had spoken, a heavyset man made his way up to her. She recognized him as being one of the guards in Ravensbruck where she had been a prisoner. She remembered having to take off her

clothes and having to walk by this man. She also remembered him as being one of the cruelest of all the guards.

As he came close to her, he reached out his hand and replied, "A fine message. How good it is to know that it is as you say, all your sins are as if they are at the bottom of the ocean, never to be remembered against you."

Rather than take out her hand and shake his, Corrie fumbled her hands in her pockets. While standing face to face with one of her captors, her heart grew cold. The man told Corrie that he was now a Christian, and he knew that God had forgiven him for all the cruel things he did, but he would like to hear it from her lips as well. The repentant

ex-guard held out his hand a second time and asked, "Will you forgive me?"

As he held out his hand, Corrie's mind was flooded with the teachings of Christ. As she wrestled with the most difficult thing she ever had to do, she knew she had to forgive him. The message of forgiveness has a prior condition. To be forgiven, one must be willing to forgive. As Corrie stood there with coldness clutching her heart, she knew that forgiveness is not an emotion. Forgiveness that comes through the enablement of the Holy Spirit of Christ can function regardless of the temperature of the heart. Corrie prayed silently, "Jesus, I can lift my hand. You can supply the feeling." As Corrie thrust her hand into his, an incredible healing flooded her whole being. With tears in her eyes, she was able to speak out, "I forgive you brother with all my heart." For a long moment they grasped each other's hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. Corrie wrote, "I had never known God's love so intensely..."

Christians who extend God's forgiveness to others "[are] being rooted and established in love, have power together with all the saints to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, know [that His] love surpasses knowledge. [They are] filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:18-19)

### Challenge Yourself

Labor Day marks the end of summer. Vacations are over and we re-focus our attention on work. It may be a time to reassess our career progress and satisfaction. Do I have adequate job security? Am I meeting my employer's expectations? Am I pleased with my own performance?

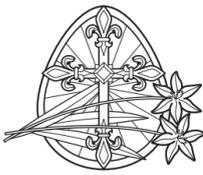
As we continue to strive, we can reassess our spiritual progress as well. It takes a strong spirit to respond to challenges that arise along the way. God said in Exodus 20:9-10... "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God." In His wisdom, our Heavenly Father knew we would need the spiritual energy that comes from weekly worship.

Won't you challenge yourself to worship each week? All meaningful progress begins in God's House.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Titus 3.1-15	Philemon	Psalms 1	Psalms 19	Psalms 37	Psalms 39	Psalms 139

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society  
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